



CASE: 1043

=== CIRCUMSTANCES OF LOSS ===

3 April 1975

MAJ ROBERT LAPHAM WAS FLYING THE LEAD A1G (#52-135043) IN A FLIGHT OF TWO ON FEB 68. THE ACFT WERE ALERTED TO JOIN AN AIRBORNE FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER (FAC) IN THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES (GC) XD 778 322 TO DESTROY THREE ENEMY TANKS. AFTER SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING ONE PASS ON THE TANKS, MAJ LAPHAM WAS ON HIS SECOND PASS AND HAD ALREADY DROPPED HIS NAPALM WHEN HE CRASHED ABOUT 100 METERS BEYOND THE TARGET. HIS DIVE ANGLE HAD APPEARED TO BE ABOUT 10 TO 15 DEGREES, AND HE HAD RELEASED HIS NAPALM AT ABOUT 500 FEET. NEITHER THE SECOND A1G, WHO WAS THEN ON HIS ATTACK RUN, NOR THE FAC OBSERVED A PARACHUTE.

GROUND FIRE HAD BEEN SEEN BY THE SECOND A1G ABOUT THREE MINUTES BEFORE MAJ LAPHAM'S CRASH. A HELICOPTER CREW ATTEMPTING THE SEARCH AND RESCUE EFFORT, WAS ABLE TO OBSERVE THE CRASH SITE CLOSELY AND REPORTED THAT THERE WERE NO RECOGNIZABLE PORTIONS OF THE AIRCRAFT REMAINING. (REF 1)

DURING THE EXISTENCE OF JCRC, THE HOSTILE THREAT IN THE AREA PRECLUDED ANY VISITS TO OR GROUND INSPECTIONS OF THE SITES INVOLVED IN THIS CASE. THIS INDIVIDUAL'S NAME AND IDENTIFYING DATA WERE TURNED OVER TO THE FOUR-PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM WITH A REQUEST FOR ANY INFORMATION AVAILABLE. NO RESPONSE WAS FORTHCOMING. MAJ LAPHAM IS CURRENTLY CARRIED IN THE PRESUMPTIVE STATUS OF DEAD, BODY NOT RECOVERED.

=== REFERENCES ===

3 April 1975

REFERENCES: <1> MSG, DET 1 14TH ACW 081306Z FEB 68. <2>CDR JTF-FA 191522Z MAY 92. <3> CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK TH 240354Z JUL 93.

=== MAJOR COORDINATE CHANGE ===

3 April 1975

COORDS CHANGED FROM XD 813 285 (VS/MIL RGN 1/PROV 01) TO XD 778 322 (LA/PROV 07/MIL RGN 3) BASED ON COORDS PROVIDED BY MSG, 14 ACW PKU RVN, DTG 081306Z FEB 68, SUBJ: AIRCRAFT LOSS.

11 August 1992

CHANGE CRASH SITE COORDINATES TO XD792357 VICE XD778322 BASED ON RE-EVALUATION OF ORIGINAL LOSS REPORT. (REF 2)

CASE: 1043 === JOINT INVESTIGATION, SURVEY OR EXCAVATION ===

11 August 1993

ON 5 JUL 93, IE3 TRAVELED TO LONG THANH HAMLET, TAN LONG VILLAGE, HUONG HOA DISTRICT, QUANG TRI PROVINCE (YD769354) TO INVESTIGATE CASE 1043. ONE WITNESS WAS INTERVIEWED BUT PROVIDED NO NEW INFORMATION FOR THIS CASE. A SUB-ELEMENT OF IE3 CONDUCTED TWO SITE SURVEYS, ONE AT THE U.S. RECORD LOCATION OF THE INCIDENT. THE OTHER AT THE WITNESS IDENTIFIED CRASH SITE. BOTH SURVEYS YIELDED NEGATIVE RESULTS. NO REMAINS, WRECKAGE, OR BURIAL SITES WERE LOCATED. (REF 3)